Handout 17:
Classroom Connection

Effective Routine for Using Whiteboards

Whiteboards are an effective tool for formative assessment, written response, and increased engagement and participation. They allow teachers to instantly determine which students understand the concepts, which students need immediate feedback, and which students need to receive additional instruction. Teachers often choose not to use whiteboards because they can distract students; some students prefer doodling to paying attention to the task at hand. Here is a field-tested routine that addresses this problem.

Preparation: Whiteboard Folders

Materials
- self-stick, dry-erase sheets (8.5 x 11). Available from http://www.c-lineproducts.com
- letter-size, file folders (1/3 cut) in an assortment of colors for grouping
- laminating machine or service
- dry-erase erasers or old socks
- dry-erase markers

Directions
1. Open the file folder and laminate it.
2. Position the file folder horizontally with the fold at the top and tab at the bottom. Then open the folder and apply the self-stick, dry-erase sheet (the whiteboard) to the inside, bottom half—the half with the tab.

Whiteboard Routine

Direct Explanation
Tell students that they are going to learn a routine for using whiteboards. First they will learn how to set up their desk for whiteboard use. Then they will learn the three-part routine: (1) Write, (2) Show Me, and (3) Erase.

Desktop Set-Up
Position the Whiteboard Folder Show students how to position the whiteboard folder. Say: *Close your whiteboard folder and place it horizontally in front of you on your desk. The tab should be at the bottom facing you and the fold should be at the top.*
Set Up "Home Base" Show students how to position the marker and eraser. Say: *The place where you put your eraser and marker is called "home base." Home base is located right above*

your folder on your desk. Your marker should be capped. (If using an old sock is an eraser, students can store their marker inside the sock for safekeeping.)

(1) Write

<u>Model</u> Remind students that their marker should be capped and on home base. Say*: I will tell you to write your first name and then say the signal word* write. *After I say* write, *you will pick up your marker, uncap it, and write your first name on the whiteboard. Watch me as I demonstrate.* Then say: *Write.* Demonstrate the routine by picking up your marker, uncapping it, flipping open your folder, writing your first name on the whiteboard, and then closing your folder. Finally, cap your marker and put it back on home base.

<u>Lead</u> Say: *Now it's your turn. We are going to practice together. Listen for the signal word* write. *When I say the signal word, you will write your first name on your whiteboard.* Ask: *What's the signal word?* (write) After doing individual checks for understanding, say: *Write.* Students should then pick up their marker, uncap it, flip open their folder, write their first name on their whiteboard, and then close their folder. Finally, they should cap their marker and put it back on home base. (If a student doesn't know the answer to a particular question, encourage participation by having him or her write *I don't know.*)

(2) Show Me

<u>Model</u> Say: *Watch as I demonstrate how I want you to show me what you wrote.* Hold the closed folder horizontally in front of you with the fold at the top. Then say: *Show me.* Demonstrate the routine by flipping open your folder to reveal what you wrote on the whiteboard—your first name. Then close your folder and put it back on your desk.

<u>Lead</u> Say: *Now it's your turn. We are going to practice together. Listen for the signal words* show me. *When I say the signal words, you will show me what you've written.* Ask: *What are the signal words?* (show me) After doing individual checks for understanding, say: *Show me.* Students should flip open their folder so that the teacher can see what they wrote. Then they should close their folder and put it back on their desk.

(3) Erase

<u>Model</u> Say: *Now watch me as I demonstrate how I want you to erase what you wrote.* With your whiteboard visible to students, pick up the eraser and hold it just to the left of what you wrote on the whiteboard—your first name. Then say: *Erase.* Demonstrate the routine by sounding out and erasing each syllable in your name, one syllable at a time. For example, read aloud the first syllable in *Frances* (Fran) and erase it. Then read aloud the second syllable in *Frances* (ces) and erase it. Finally, close your folder and put it back on your desk. Put your eraser back on home base.

<u>Lead</u> Say: *Now it's your turn. We are going to practice together. Listen for the signal word* erase. *When I say the signal word, you will sound out and erase your name one syllable at a time.* Ask: *What's the signal word?* (erase) After doing individual checks for understanding, say: *Erase.* Students should flip open their folder and pick up their eraser. They should say aloud each syllable in their name, one syllable at a time, and then erase it. Then they should close their folder and put their erase back on home base. Say: *Good. Now you know the routine. It's on. Let's try it out.*

Purposeful Uses Across the Curriculum

After modeling and practicing the Whiteboard Routine, you can use it for instruction in any content area. It also can be used with instructional strategies such as Think-Write-Pair-Share.

Here are examples of purposeful uses across the curriculum:
Comprehension: In the story we just read, who was the main character?
Math: Show me the Y-intercept formula. ($y = mx + b$)
Science: What's the first step in the scientific process?
Social Studies: What are two lawmaking bodies that make up the U.S. Congress? (House, Senate)
Vocabulary: Write a question using the word *coordinate.*
Word Recognition: Write the word *teenager.* Now show me the syllable breaks.

Source: Bessellieu, F., & Hunsaker, D. (2011). Effective routine for using whiteboards. *Direct Instruction News*, Spring, 2011, v. 11, no. 2, 9-10.